

Since my last to you, my dear Father, I have been an actor in two of the most obstinate and most successful contests that the British arms have experienced this war; the defense of Savannah and the reduction of Charlestown. As it must surprise the people of England, that a Rebel garrison should stand six weeks siege, against Sir H.C. and a British army, it would be unpardonable of me, not to give you some account of our operations before Charlestown. On the 26th of December last, Sir H. sailed from York, with an army of eight thousand men, and a number of men of war; hard and contrary winds scattered the fleet, and before the army landed in South Carolina, it was the middle of February. They took possession of Johns and James Islands to the southward of Charlestown; got the transports and small craft up Stone river, that divides the two Islands, and was employed to near the end of March in landing stores and provisions, making every preparation for a siege, and waiting for a Corps of 1500 hundred men that marched from Savannah across the country, under the orders of General Paterson. About the 20th of March, the Light Infantry, and Grenadiers took position on the main, along the Ashley river, stretching from Wapoo cut, to Drayton's house, 12 miles above Charlestown. On the 28th Paterson's corps joined and early the next morning the body of the army was thrown across the Ashley river. On the 30th the town was invested.

Charlestown is a handsome and well built town situated on the extremity of a tongue of land formed by two large & navigable rivers, Cooper and Ashley; it lays open to the sea, and has the entrance of its harbor defended by a strong fort erected on Sullivan's Island. In October Parker's had success before this place in the year 76, induced our Navy to hold the reduction of it exceedingly difficult, and come(?) to pass it hazardous. Our enemy deemed both impracticable.

Charlestown is fortified to the country by a very strong and well constructed entrenchment; covered with a wett [sic], and dry ditch, and a double abattis, and defended at every point by a numerous artillery. To the sea its covered by four Bastions mounting heavy cannon, and conected [sic] with curtains(?) for musketry; its flanks to the rivers are protected with shipping, and batteries. The strength of Charlestown, its consequence to the country, the recent example shown them at Savannah, a belief that fort Sullivan would effectually prevent our navy from getting up to the Town, and persuasion that our army could not afford a Corps across Cooper river, to cut off their retreat, induced them to throw their whole force into town, and stand a siege.

Finding the town in this situation, and the enemy thus disposed we opened our trenches on the evening of the 1st of April, about eight hundred yards from their works. By the 10th we finished our first parallel, and compleated [sic] our batteries. On this day we summoned the Town to surrender; their answer was short and spirited: a determination to hold out, to the last extremity. A few days after this, we opened near 20 piece of artillery, and a number of small mortars; their works being all of clay, our shot was of little effect, but our shells did some execution. A reinforcement arriving from York, Lord Cornwallis with a detachment of near 3000 men was thrown over Cooper river: his Lordship took a position along the banks of the river, that prevented their receiving any supplys [sic] from the Country, and effectually cut of their retreat. O---- to this movement the Admiral had passed fort Sullivan with little loss, and anchored within a mile of the Town. By the beginning of May we had drawn a parallel, and compleated [sic] batteries within 150 yards of their works. On the eighth we summoned them again, but could not agree on the terms. Hostilities again commenced, and with more vigour

than ever. On the 11th they sent a flag accepting of our terms, and on the 12th the garrison and town of Charlestown surrendered prisoners of war. By this conquest we have got near 300 pieces of artillery, 4 ships of war, and from five to six thousand prisoners. To much for P---- ---- ----- for that interests myself.

My Mother has wrote that my Uncle intends purchasing me a Majority as soon as he can if he has it immediately it will be of more service to me than two(?) thousand pounds, ten years service. As I am but a young Captain I must give a great deal more than the regulation; if you can persuading Uncle to lodge 2000(lbs.) in some Agents hands, and send me a letter of credit on him, I am almost certain of getting a Majority in a few months after the receipt of it. If you could procure me letters of recommendation to Sir H.C. Lord Cornwallis, and General -----, it would be of great service to me. When my Uncle, and you consider that I am a Captain of near two years standing, without my Comm----- having cost me anything; and that I have been 6 years in the army, and during that period have not drawn for much much more than 200(lbs), and am now in a situation now to trouble you more, accept for -----, I am persuaded you will not think my prompt request unreasonable if its granted I will soon be high in the army. If not, must not con---- your after -----

Charlestown May 20th 1780

Charles Campbell